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UD Educator Suggests How Ohio School Can Improve Teaching Methods

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UD EDUCATOR SUGGESTS HOW OHIO SCHOOLS CAN IMPROVE SCIENCE TEACHING METHODS

DAYTON, Ohio -- Science students today learn more from computers, television and similar tools than they do from textbooks, says a University of Dayton professor of educational administration.

"To teach science to today's students, we need to use the tools they use," says Thomas Matczynski.

That's why UD professors are pioneering a model science curriculum that calls for an end to tedious lectures, textbooks and the memorization of isolated facts.

Matczynski co-directs the University of Dayton/Dayton Public Schools Science Project. He says the new science curriculum being developed by the project could be used in public schools throughout Ohio and the rest of the nation.

The new curriculum will stress the use of computers and multi-media approaches to teaching and learning.

Matczynski notes that a recent test administered by the National Assessment for Educational Progress demonstrates that some American middle and high school students know basic scientific facts and principles, but few are able to analyze, interpret or apply that knowledge.

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With U.S. businesses fighting to remain competitive in world markets, this inability to apply facts to work situations could have grave future implications, he says.

"American students can be equal to their Asian and European counterparts in subjects like math and science only if teaching materials and methods are improved," Matczynski explains.

"Schools today, for the most part, teach isolated facts. Hands-on methods are needed to draw a link between math, science and technology and show students how scientists really work.

"It's a way of teaching that uses the tools and techniques today's students are familar with and comfortable with: a multi-disciplinary and multi-sensory approach."

The Dayton project is in its second year of development and Matczynski expects some preliminary results to be ready in another 12 to 18 months. The project is designed to help the Dayton public schools improve their science curriculum but the findings will be applicable to public schools anywhere.

The project is funded by the National Science Foundation, the Dayton Public Schools and 30 corporate and government partners. Matczynski says that IBM has been particularly helpful in providing equipment and personnel assistance.

-30-

For media interviews, call **Thomas Matczynski** at (513) 229-3734.